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Frigid Slopes Repel Posse

Two Plane Crash Rescuers Taken Ill

Sheriff to Lead Mounted Crew In New Peak Assault

The frigid slopes of Mt. Charleston repelled five members of a sheriff's posse rescue team yesterday morning during efforts to reach the wreckage of the Air Force C-54 transport that crashed Thursday south of the nearby peak.

Chief ranger Hank Hoffman made his way back with four men after two of the original eight-man crew had contracted colds at the icy levels.

Nellis Air Force Base paramedics S/Sgt. Derald D. Parks and A1C Gordon C. Bailey pushed on with another sheriff's deputy to a point 10 miles from the scene of the crash on a saddle close to the peak of the mountain.

A steady uphill climb faces the depleted rescue team but Nellis authorities estimated that this crew and another now only 790 feet from the plane should reach their destination by noon today.

Flickering hopes that there may be life in the crash area were fanned and then dimmed yesterday after a report that a bonfire had been spotted.

Just before dusk, Maj. R. A. Windoffer of Nellis radioed that while flying an F100 jet fighter over the wreckage he saw what he thought was a bonfire with two men standing beside it.

A double-check made by Capt. Miles D. Baker of Nellis in a T33 jet trainer disclosed no campfires nor any sign of life in the crash area. Capt. Baker combed the area for 15 minutes before radioing in his negative report.

Sheriff W. E. Leypoldt will lead a 15-man mounted posse up the 11,000-foot peak this morning at 6. Traveling with the group will be Lt. Col. G. H. Pittman, chief of the cargo branch, Headquarters, Norton AFB, Calif., who is directing the flight safety investigation for the Air Force; and Lt. Col. Frank Schwab.

APPROVED
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